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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000694

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/25/2020
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTER ATMAR DISCUSSES POLICE TRAINING;
INSURGENT REINTEGRATION WITH AMBASSADOR HOLBROOKE

REF: KABUL 628

Classified By: AMBASSADOR KARL EIKENBERRY FOR REASONS 1.4 (b & d)

SUMMARY

1. (C/NF) In a February 17 meeting, Interior Minister Mohammed Hanif Atmar told Ambassador Holbrooke, Ambassador Eikenberry, and General Caldwell that:

-- he wants to train 2,000-3,000 police officer candidates outside of Afghanistan, each year for the next five years. Atmar is looking at Jordan, Turkey, and the UAE as possible training sites.

-- while GIROA cannot take reintegrated insurgents into the Army or Police, Atmar's plan for a local defense initiative (septel) and public companies for infrastructure and agricultural development would meet reintegrees' economic and security needs.

-- Saudi intervention; the finalization of GIROA's insurgent reintegration program; and the success of the Marjah operations would all move insurgent reintegration forward.

-- while Atmar favors 16 weeks of training for police (which would enable full literacy training) he believes NATO Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM-A)'s plan for a condensed six week program as acceptable, providing the number of training hours remains the same. END SUMMARY

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING FOR AFGHAN POLICE

2. (C/NF) Noting that police growth is enormously constrained by a lack of trainers and training space, Minister Atmar wants to send 2,000-3,000 Afghan police officer (as distinct from enlisted) trainees to Jordan, Turkey, and the UAE for training each year for the next five years. Atmar's first choice is the International Police Training Center in Jordan, which has room for 1,000 trainees per year; facilities in Turkey and the UAE (Sharjah Police Academy and an under-utilized UAE military facility 100kms from Abu Dhabi) could take another 1,000 trainees each. Atmar estimates an annual cost of \$3,000 to \$4,000 per pupil per year (thus potential costs of \$6 million to \$12 million per year). Atmar wants Jordan to contribute by waiving the cost of the facility and the lodging; NATO/ISAF would pay for transportation, food, and training materials; and the cost of foreign trainers would be born by contributing nations.

¶3. (C/NF) The Minister sees several advantages to this approach: European nations would be more willing to send police trainers to Jordan than to Afghanistan; the prospect of a year's training abroad would draw young, educated Afghans into the police officer corps; a generation of Afghan police officers trained overseas would help to break the ANP's culture of corruption; Atmar would also send two Afghan assistants for each international trainer, after three years these assistants would themselves be fully qualified trainers. Ambassador Holbrooke said he had already raised the issue with Jordanian Foreign Minister Judeh, who was positive and promised to follow up. NTM-A Commanding General LTG Caldwell told Atmar that UAE, through its Kabul Defense Attach, had made a formal offer to explore sending police trainers to Afghanistan. Atmar asked Ambassador Holbrooke to engage the Arab countries on Afghanistan's behalf, claiming that they would be more responsive to an American approach. Holbrooke agreed to do so, and asked Lt. General Caldwell to provide him with precise asks.

REINTEGRATION REQUIRES JOBS AND SECURITY

¶4. (C/NF) Minister Atmar said that hundreds of insurgents were approaching the government, and that a proper GIROA response to them would have to address issues of justice and amnesty, political inclusion, economic and security needs. Noting that we cannot take them into the police and the army, Atmar seeks to address the final two factors by creating a Local Defense Initiative (not yet approved by President Karzai; see septel) and two large public sector

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companies, focusing respectively on infrastructure and agricultural projects. Foreign aid in those sectors would be channeled through these public contractors, which would employ former insurgents (along with other Afghans) and provide them with limited job training (of a month or two) and a decent career. Atmar argued that microcredit won't work for insurgents; they must be employed in a controlled and well-managed manner. He estimated that the public sector companies could absorb 10,000 to 15,000 unemployed Afghans, including former insurgents who turned in their weapons, and former mujahideen disarmed through the Disarmament of Illegally Armed Groups (DIAG) and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs.

¶5. (S/NF) Atmar cited several factors that would move insurgent reintegration forward: Saudi intervention; the finalization of GIROA's reintegration program; and the effects of the Marjah operation. Citing the arrest of Mullah Berader, Atmar said Pakistani help on two more arrests -- those of Mullah Mansoor of the Quetta Shura and Maulavi Kabir of Peshawar -- would further spur reintegration by showing Taliban that they could not rely on a Pakistani safe-haven. Atmar said contacts tell us that Berader was arrested because he was in favor of reconciliation. Noting that both the Chief of Army Staff, General Kayani, and ISI Director Ahmed Suja Pasha were out of the country when Berader was arrested, Ambassador Holbrooke advised Atmar that we should be careful of drawing conclusions.

POLICE: QUALITY, QUANTITY, AND TRAINING LENGTH:

¶6. (C/NF) Noting that police training and quality are on my mind, Atmar said he favored expanding police basic training to sixteen weeks (from eight) so it could include a full literacy element. Ambassador Holbrooke asked Atmar to comment on the apparent divergence of opinion between this position and NTM-A's plan to condense police training from eight to six weeks. Atmar noted that a six-week program with the same number of hours as the eight week (as in NTM-A's proposal) would be acceptable; indeed, it would be necessary if Afghanistan is to meet its goal of 109,000 police by October 31, 2010. However, Atmar then proposed to square

this circle by reducing attrition and increasing retention while the international community increased the number of trainers -- enabling Afghanistan to reach its growth goals while still providing a longer training course.

¶7. (C/NF) Ambassador Holbrooke wondered if compressing the basic training curriculum from eight weeks to six would have a negative impact on quality, and wondered if 109k was an achievable target by October 30, 2010. The Minister said that a six week course would not lessen the quality of the force; recruits would accept the longer days, he said. He argued that the police were on track to meet the 2010 growth goals, with roughly 92,000 police currently on duty, and another 6,000 de facto police present but not counted on the rolls. These over-Tashkil police, Atmar explained, are not paid by the internationally-funded Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), and thus are not counted by LOTFA as official police. However, they are paid by private donors and customers (through MoI) for guarding projects like the Logar copper mine, Indian and Asian Development Bank road projects, and UN facilities. Atmar remarked that the shortages in the ANP ranks were most serious with officers and NCOs, but not as serious in patrolmens' ranks.

¶8. (U) S/SRAP has cleared this cable.
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